

ginge in his grete cave, hadde freten and dreynt in his empty wombe. But natheles Poliphemus, wood for his blinde visage, yald to Ulixes joye by his sorrowful teres; this is to seyn, that Ulixes smoot out the eye of Poliphemus that stood in his forehead, for which Ulixes hadde joye, whan he say Poliphemus wepinge and blinde.

HERCULES is celebrable for his harde traivailes; he dauntede the proude Centaures, half hors, half man; and he brafte the dispoynge fro the cruel lyoun, that is to seyn, he slowh the lyoun & rafte him his skin. He smoot the briddes that highten Arpyes with certein arwes. He ravisshe apples fro the wakinge dragoun, and his hand was the more hevy for the goldene metal. He drow Cerberus, the hound of helle, by his treble cheyne. He, overcomer, as it is seyde, hath put an unmeke lord foddre to his cruel hors; this is to seyn, that Hercules slowh Diomedes, & made his hors to freten him. And he, Hercules, slowh Ydra the serpent, and brende the venim. And Achelous the flood, defouled in his forhed, dreynte his shamefast visage in his strondes; this is to seyn, that Achelous coude transfigure himself into dyverse lyknesses; and, as

he faught with Hercules, at the laste he tornede him into a bole; and Hercules brai hidde him in his river. And he, for shame, caste adoun Antheus the gyaunt in the wratthes of Libie; & Cacus apaysede the Hercules slowh the monstre Cacus, and apaysede with that deeth the wratthe of Evander. And the bristled boor markede with scomes the shuldres of Hercules, the whiche shuldres the heye cerle of hevne sholde thriste. And the laste of his labours was, that he sustened the hevne upon his nekke unbowed; & he deservede eftsones the hevne, to ben the prys of his laste traivale.

COTH now thanne, ye stronge men, theras the heye wey of the grete ensaumpledeythow. Onye men, why nake ye youre bakkes? As who seyeth: O ye slowe and delicat men, why flee ye adversites, and ne fighten nat ayeins hem by vertu, to winnen the mede of the hevne? for the erthe, overcomen, yeveth the sterres; this is to seyn, that, whan that erthely lust is overcomen, a man is maketh worthy to the hevne.

DE CONSOLATIONE PHILOSOPHIE. BOOK V. PROSE I.
Dixerat, orationisque cursum.

HE hadde seyde, and tornede the cours of hir resoun to some othre thinges to ben treted and to ben ysped. Channe seyde I: Certes, rightful is thynamonestinge and ful digne by auctoritee. But that thou seidest whylom, that the questioun of the divyne purviaunce is enlaced with many other questiouns, I understonde wel and proeve it by the same thing. But I axe yif that thou wenest that hap be any thing in any weys; and, yif thou wenest that hap be any thing, what is it? Channe quod she, I haste me to yilden and assoilen to thee the dette of my bihest, and to shewen and openen the wey, by which wey thou mayst come ayein to thy contree. But albeit so that the thinges which that thou axest ben right profitable to knowe, yif ben they diverse somewhat fro the path of my purpos; and it is to douten that thou ne be maketh wery by misweyes, so that thou ne mayst nat suffice to mesuren the right wey.

NE doute thee therof nothing, quod I. for, for to knowen thilke thinges togidere, in the whiche thinges I

delyte me greetly, that shal ben to me in stede of reste; sin it is nat to douten of the thinges folwinge, whan every syde of thy disputacioun shal han be stedfast to me by undoutous feith.

THANNE seyde she: That manere wol I don thee; & bigan to speken right thus. Certes, quod she, yif any wight diffinishe hap in this manere, that is to seyn, that hap is bitydinge ybrought forth by foolish moevinge and by no knettinge of causes. I conferme that hap nis right naught in no wyse; and I deme aloutrely that hap nis, ne dwelleth but a voice, as who seith, but an ydel word, withouten any significacioun of thing submitted to that vois. for what place mighte ben left, or dwellinge, to folye and to disordenaunce, sin that God ledeth and constraineth alle thinges by ordre? for this sentence is verray & sooth, that Nothing ne hath his beinge of naught; to the whiche sentence none of these olde folk ne withseyde never; albeit so that they ne understoden ne mended it naught by God, prince and beginnere of werkinge, but they casten it as a manere foundement of subject material, that is to seyn, of the nature of alle resoun. And yif that any thing is woxen or comen of no causes, than shal it seme that thilke thing is comen or woxen

of naught; but yif this ne may nat ben don, thanne is it nat possible, that hap be any swich thing as I have diffinisshed a litle heer bifore. How shal it thanne be? quod I. Nis ther thanne nothing that by right may be cleped either hap or elles aventure of fortune; or is ther aught, albeit so that it is hid fro the peple, to which these wordes ben covenable? Myn Aristotulis, quod she, in the book of his Phisik, diffinissheth this thing by short resoun, & neigh to the sothe. In which manere? quod I.

AS ofte, quod she, as men doon any thing for grace of any other thing, and another thing than thilke thing that men entenden to don bitydeth by some causes, it is cleped hap. Right as a man dalf the erthe by cause of tilyinge of the feild, and founde ther a gobet of gold bidolven, thanne wenen folk that it is bifalle by fortuous bitydinge. But, for sothe, it nis nat of naught, for it hath his propre causes; of whiche causes the cours unforeseyn & unwar semeth to han maketh hap. for yif the tilyere of the feild ne dolve nat in the erthe, and yif the hyder of the gold ne hadde hid the gold in thilke place, the gold ne hadde nat been founde. Thise ben thanne the causes of the abregginge of fortuit hap, the which abregginge of fortuit hap cometh of causes encountinge and flowinge togidere to himself, and nat by the entencion of the doer, for neither the hyder of the gold ne the deliver of the feild ne understoden nat that the gold sholde han ben founde; but, as I sayde, it bifolde and ran togidre that he dalf theras that other hadde hid the gold. Now may I thus diffinissheth hap. hap is an unwar bitydinge of causes assembled in thinges that ben don for som other thing. But thilke ordre, procedinge by an uneschuable bindinge togidre, which that descendeth fro the welle of purviaunce that ordeineth alle thinges in hir places and in hir tymes, maketh that the causes rennen and assemblen togidere.

Metre I.

Rupis Achemenie scopulis, ubi versa sequentum.

TIGRIS & Eufrates resoven and springen of oo welle, in the craggis of the roche of the contree of Achemenie, theras the fleinge bataile fischeth hir dartes, retorned in the brestes of hem that folwen hem. And sone after the same riveres, Tigris & Eufrates, unjoien and departen hir wateres. And yif they comen togideres, and ben assembled and cleped togidere into o cours, thanne moten thilke thinges fleten togidere which that the water of the entrechaunginge flood bringeth. Theshippes & the stokkes arraced with the flood moten assemblen; & the wateres ymedled wrapeth or implyeth many fortunel happes or maneres; the whiche wandringe happes, natheles, thilke declyninge lownesse of the erthe and the flowinge ordre of the slydinge water governeth. Right so fortune, that semeth as that it fleteth with slaked or ungovernede brydles, it suffereth brydles, that is to seyn, to be governed, and passeth by thilke lawe, that is to seyn, by thilke divyne ordenaunce.

Prose II.
Animadverto, inquam.

HIS understonde I wel, quod I, and I acorde wel that it is right as thou seyest. But I axe yif ther be any libertee of free wil in this ordre of causes that clyven thus togidere in hemself; or elles I wolde witen yif that the destinal cheyne constraineth the movinges of the corages of men?

IS, quod she; ther is libertee of free wil. Ne ther ne was nevere no nature of resoun that it ne hadde libertee of free wil, for every thing that may naturely usen resoun, it hath doom by which it decerneth & demeth every thing; thanne knoweth it, by itself, thinges that ben to flee and thinges that ben to desiren. And thilke thing that any wight demeth to ben desired, that axeth or desireth he; & fleeth thilke thing that he troweth ben to flee. Wherefore in alle thinges that resoun is, in hem also is libertee of willinge and of nullinge. But I ne ordeyne nat, as who seyeth, I ne graunte nat, that this libertee be evene lyk in alle thinges. forwhy in the souveraines devynes substaunces, that is to seyn, in spirits, jugement is more cleer, and wil nat ycorrupted, and might redy to speden thinges that ben desired. But the soules of men moten nedes be more free whan they loken hem in the speculacioun or lookinge of the devyne thought, and lasse free whan they slyden into the bodies; and yit lasse free whan they ben gadered togidere & comprehended in erthely membres. But the laste servage is whan that they ben yeven to vyces, & han yfalle from the possession of hir propre resoun. for after that they han cast away hir eyen fro the light of the sovereyn soothfastnesse to lowe thinges and derke, anon they derken by the cloude of ignoraunce & ben troubled by felonous talents; to the whiche tal-

Boethius de
Consolatione
Philosophie.
Book V.